

REMARKS

Claims 1-37 are pending. Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31 are amended herein.

In addition to the claim amendments, Applicants are providing new arguments that are included in the discussion below. Also, Applicants respectfully note that, in the instant Advisory Action, a response was not provided to the separate arguments made with regard to Claims 7, 17, 27 and 35.

103 Rejections

Claims 1-4, 7-14, 17-24, 27-33 and 35-37

The Office Action mailed January 27, 2005 (the "prior Office Action") states that Claims 1-4, 7-14, 17-24, 27-33 and 35-37 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fernandes (U.S. Patent No. 6,014,135) and Choy et al. ("Choy;" U.S. Patent No. 5,506,952).

According to the claimed embodiments of the present invention, there are: at least two groups of graphic elements visibly displayed at the same time; elements are displayed regardless of whether they are active or inactive; and at least one element in the second group is made active when one of the elements in the first group is selected (thereby guiding the user through the graphic elements in logical order).

Applicants respectfully agree with the statements in the prior Office Action to the effect that Fernandes does not show or suggest the claimed embodiments wherein "first and second pluralities of graphic elements are

visibly displayed at the same time regardless of which of said tasks is being performed and regardless of whether said first and second pluralities of graphic elements are active or inactive, wherein ... user selection of said element with said element inactive does not initiate an action” as recited in independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31.

However, Applicants respectfully disagree with the statements in the prior Office Action, as well as in the instant Advisory Action, that Fernandes teaches “activating a second portion of said second plurality of graphic elements in response to user selection of an element from said first plurality of graphic elements.” The prior Office Action cites column 10, lines 6-32, and in particular first icons 40(A-C) and second icons 42(A-C), as teaching these limitations. The instant Advisory Action cites Figure 3 and column 10, lines 32-47, as teaching these limitations. However, according to Fernandes, selection of a first icon 40(A-C) does not activate a second icon 42(A-C), nor does selection of a second icon 42(A-C) activate a first icon 40(A-C). In other words, according to Fernandes, the first icons 40(A-C) and the second icons 42(A-C) are always active. Fernandes does not show or suggest inactive icons.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited portions of Fernandes, and Fernandes in its entirety, cannot and do not show or suggest that “user selection of an element with said element active initiates an action in response to said selection while user selection of said element with said element inactive does not initiate an action” as recited in independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31 and “making a second portion of said second plurality of

graphic elements active in response to user selection of an element from said first plurality of graphic elements” as recited in independent Claims 1, 11 and 21 and as similarly recited in independent Claim 31.

Applicants respectfully submit that Choy does not overcome the shortcomings of Fernandes. Applicants respectfully submit that “active” and “inactive,” with regard to the states of a graphic element, are defined in the claims. That is, an element that is active initiates an action (in response to being selected by a user) while an element that is inactive does not initiate an action (in response to being selected by a user). With that claimed definition in mind, Applicants respectfully submit that the icons of Choy are neither active nor inactive. Choy only describes making icons less visible or more visible (e.g., they are grayed out or not). According to Choy, there is no relationship between the visibility of an icon and whether or not the icon is active or inactive.

Furthermore, Choy only describes icons that can be dragged or not dragged. “Selecting” according to Choy only constitutes dragging an icon from one location in a display to another. Selecting one of Choy’s icons does not result in an action being initiated. Selecting one of Choy’s icons does not result in activation of another icon. Although Choy uses the word “icon,” Applicants respectfully submit that the icons of Choy cannot be equated with the graphic elements of the present claimed invention.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Choy (alone or in combination with Fernandes) does not show or suggest that “user selection of

an element with said element active initiates an action in response to said selection while user selection of said element with said element inactive does not initiate an action” as recited in independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31 and “making a second portion of said second plurality of graphic elements active in response to user selection of an element from said first plurality of graphic elements” as recited in independent Claims 1, 11 and 21 and as similarly recited in independent Claim 31.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31 traverse the basis for rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) and are in condition for allowance. As such, Applicants also respectfully submit that Claims 2-4, 7-10, 12-14, 17-20, 22-24, 27-30, 32-33 and 35-37 traverse the basis for rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as these claims are dependent on allowable base claims and recite additional limitations.

Claims 7, 17, 27 and 35

Applicants respectfully submit that Fernandes does not show or suggest the particular arrangement of the graphic elements recited by Claims 7, 17, 27 and 35, and respectfully disagree with the statements in the prior Office Action to the contrary. Specifically, Applicants respectfully submit that Fernandes does not show or suggest the claimed embodiments “wherein said first icons and said second icons are arranged to indicate a hierarchy of said tasks within said logical order.”

Applicants respectfully submit that Choy does not overcome this shortcoming. Considering that the claimed second icons are graphic elements

that are made active in response to the selection of another graphic element as recited in the independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31 from which Claims 7, 17, 27 and 35 depend, then Applicants respectfully submit that Choy (alone or in combination with Fernandes) does not show or suggest the claimed embodiments “wherein said first icons and said second icons are arranged to indicate a hierarchy of said tasks within said logical order” as recited in Claims 7, 17, 27 and 35. For this additional reason, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 7, 17, 27 and 35 traverse the basis for rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Claims 5-6, 15-16, 25-26 and 35

The prior Office Action states that Claims 5-6, 15-16, 25-26 and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fernandes, Choy and Applicants’ Admitted Prior Art (AAPA).

Claims 5-6, 15-16, 25-26 and 35 are dependent on independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31 and recite additional limitations. Thus, by demonstrating that the combination of Fernandes, Choy and AAPA does not show or suggest the limitations of Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31, it is also demonstrated that the combination of Fernandes, Choy and AAPA does not show or suggest the limitations of Claims 5-6, 15-16, 25-26 and 35.

As presented above, Applicants respectfully submit that Fernandes and Choy do not show or suggest the present invention as recited in independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31. Applicants also respectfully submit that AAPA does not overcome the shortcomings of Fernandes and Choy.

Specifically, Applicants respectfully submit that AAPA, alone or in combination with Fernandes and Choy, does not show or suggest “making a second portion of said second plurality of graphic elements active in response to user selection of an element from said first plurality of graphic elements” as recited in independent Claims 1, 11 and 21 and as similarly recited in independent Claim 31, nor does AAPA, alone or in combination with Fernandes and Choy, show or suggest that “user selection of an element with said element active initiates an action in response to said selection while user selection of said element with said element inactive does not initiate an action” as recited in independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31.

In summary, Applicants respectfully submit that Fernandes, Choy and AAPA, alone or in combination, do not show or suggest the present claimed invention as recited in independent Claims 1, 11, 21 and 31. As such, Applicants also respectfully submit that Claims 5-6, 15-16, 25-26 and 35 traverse the basis for rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as these claims are dependent on allowable base claims and recite additional limitations.

Conclusions

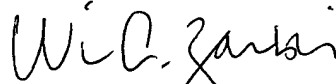
In light of the above remarks, reconsideration of the rejected claims is respectfully requested.

Based on the arguments presented above, it is respectfully asserted that Claims 1-37 overcome the rejections of record and, therefore, allowance of these claims is solicited.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative if the Examiner believes such action would expedite resolution of the present Application.

Respectfully submitted,

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